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USSR Report

HUMAN RESOURCES

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LABOR

RSFSR GOSKOMTRUD OFFICIAL ON IMPROVING WORK PERFORMANCE

Moscow SOTSIALISTICHESKAYA INDUSTRIYA in Russian 19 Jul 86 p 2

[Interview with A. Blokhin, chairman of the State Committee for Labor RSFSR, by correspondent L. Tsvetkov, under the rubric "Our Dialogues: Work Time Is for Work". "Inspect, in Order to Help"]

[Text] The work style of the Russian Federation's State Committee for Labor has recently changed markedly. Workers in the [central] organization are overseeing their local subdivisions more substantively, and the latter are providing the enterprises with more practical assistance. Our correspondent L. Tsvetkov discusses this restructuring with A. Blokhin, chairman of the RSFSR's Goskomtrud [State Committee for Labor].

[Question] Prior to our meeting, Anatoliy Prokopovich, I spoke with many workers on the committee. I was puzzled more than anything else by what I heard. Everything is so simple and obvious that one cannot help wondering why what is being done now was not done earlier?

[Answer] Simple? Obvious? I am glad to hear that. If our associates were able to describe what is occurring in this way, it means that they themselves have thoroughly grasped the idea that the committee's assigned function of exercising state control over the use of labor resources can in no way be performed in isolation from the practical work--the organization of their most sensible and effective use. Not so very long ago, one sensed internal resistance: What? "Degrade" the lofty mission of state control with common organizational work? You can see that people are beginning to think differently.... A restructuring is underway. And we need to continue it, to enhance the effectiveness of the work performed by the administrative system as demanded at the June Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee.

How did we begin it? We demanded that our local agencies report not what they have investigated but what they have done since their investigation. Take the matter of being late for work. Why is this permitted? In one case, city transport was inadequate. In another, someone had to buy medicine for a child, but the pharmacy does not open until 0900. In yet another case.... In Novosibirsk I asked one worker why he shows up for work 45 minutes after the shift has started. He was actually surprised: "What about it? I am used to

doing that." No one stopped him at the entrance-gate, because there was no entrance-gate. They will show a full 8 hours for him on the time sheet. They give everyone 8 hours. What he failed to accomplish because he was late he will finish up at the end of the shift, on overtime, for extra pay.

This is the way things were done. Our inspectors arrived and wrote down all of this, because that did not involve a lot of work. The situation improved for a time, but not for long. We have oriented the people towards something else: large-scale inspection "coverage" is not necessary. Pick out the enterprises with the most disturbing situation and, once you have inspected them, help them to organize things. See to it that there is real control over admission to the grounds and conscientious record-keeping with respect to hours worked. See to it that administrative, public and moral pressure is actually brought to bear on the violators of discipline. Get the ispolkom to see that the transport and other service organizations operate not however it suits them but in accordance with the enterprise needs....

We encountered the following attitude in our local subdivisions, however: It is our job, they reason, to reveal and analyze things and to make suggestions. I recently looked at the reports of D. Tsybikdzhapov, chairman of the Buryat ASSR Goskomtrud. They did nothing more than record the facts: so much absenteeism; the commission for combatting drunkenness is not active; this one has "relaxed his attention"....

We also find comrades who "go along"--just that, go along--with the readjustment. What has A. Demenkov, head of the labor department of the Kalinin Oblast Is polkom, done, for example? He selected ten enterprises to receive practical assistance. But what kind of enterprises? Each of them has less than 100 workers. In addition, the situation at some of them was not even very disturbing. And this is the convenient way in which our worker has attempted to resolve the problem of increasing labor productivity in his area. When it became clear that the use of labor resources was not improving and that absenteeism had even increased in the oblast, the department head was summoned to the committee for an explanation. This helped.

[Question] In our discussion, Anatoliy Prokopovich, you have so far mentioned only the initial steps necessary for establishing elementary order. I know, however, that this work is actually far more extensive and far-reaching....

[Answer] I would say that these steps create a normal situation for the most important thing: the introduction of scientific organization of labor. Particularly perceptible improvements are achieved when the work stations are made more efficient, when the brigade forms of work are developed, and when the output quota system is improved. At the Tula Meat and Poultry Combine, for example, the 57 former small brigades were consolidated into 24 large, economically self-sufficient brigades, and comprehensive norms and rates and standardized assignments were established for the brigades of fitters and repairmen. And what was the result? Losses of work time were reduced by more than a third.

Here is another example. In Bashkiria the same kind of work is systematically performed by the committee for labor of that autonomous republic. M. Fatkullin,

its chairman, recently reported the results: losses of work time have been reduced by a quarter to enterprises which have received help. And although only slightly more than one-tenth of the total number of workers in the ASSR work at those enterprises, this has resulted in a 19 percent drop in losses for the region as a whole. Incidentally, the same trend can be seen throughout the Russian Federation: at those enterprises where the inspections have been followed up with assistance, losses of time have been cut more than two times as rapidly as the average for industry and construction in the RSFSR.

[Question] The readers of our newspaper are familiar with certain experiments in the area of labor: an experiment in combining jobs in Chelyabinsk and one involving the collective contract in Novosibirsk. I have heard about yet another experiment, however. A job-placement experiment in Ulyanovsk Oblast. Could you describe this economic experiment in somewhat greater detail?

[Answer] It is essentially the following. A staff of active people with initiative has been set up at the city job-placement office, which establishes contact with enterprises and with all agencies and organizations dealing with the use of labor resources. The objective is to retain workers in production, to reduce to a minimum the amount of time required to place people in jobs and to identify additional sources of workers: bring pensioners and temporarily unemployed citizens into production, and register young people who have reached working age.

Workers in the office take preventive action. A personnel department received notification that an individual was being released "at his own request," for example. Who wrote it? A veteran worker and a Communist. Why? He did not get along with his bosses. They no longer handle such a notice as a formality even in the trade union committee. If necessary, it is considered in the party committee with a worker from the job-placement office. The discussion with the shop chief goes something like this: "How you settle the conflict is up to you, but the worker must take back his notice." Another situation: a female worker was planning to quit. She had received a new apartment, and it was difficult to get to work. She was given two choices. The first involved equal pay. In the second case, the pay was somewhat less, but it was precisely where the worker from the office wanted to send her: a new operation had been started up, and they needed workers there. The discussion was the following: "Think about it a couple of days, bearing in mind the fact that in the second case a place will be provided for your child in a kindergarten, and we shall draw up your transfer without any break in total length of service." There are dozens of alternatives.

What does the increased attention to the individual produce? Previously, when a worker went from one enterprise to another in Ulyanovsk, he lost more than 20 days. The figure is now about 2 weeks. If we multiply the time saved by the number of people placed on jobs, we find that the work of 600 people is saved each year. It is like an additional plant operating in the city. And a reduction of approximately 2 percentage points in personnel turnover has been the equivalent of adding 500 year-round workers. Additional sources of labor resources have provided another 2,500.

[Question] How are you managing to step up control and increase your assistance? Your local subdivisions are not very large, after all.

[Answer] That is true. At the rayon level there are no representatives from our department at all in many cases, even though the rayispolkoms have not been relieved of their constitutional duty to handle questions pertaining to the use of the work force. We are therefore presently looking for new ways to interact with local management agencies and enterprises, all of which have labor and wage, personnel and other services.

At the republic level, however, we oriented ourselves at the very beginning to work with the AUCCTU and the branch ministries. It was difficult to find a common language at first. We were still viewed only as inspectors who record certain things and issue instructions and who should not be permitted into one's branch "domain" if possible. The benefits of working together are now apparent, however, and the situation has changed. We have reliable partners in local industry, in the RSFSR Ministry of Motor Transport and in certain branches of the State Agro-Industrial Committee. We receive a great deal of assistance in every respect from the Russian Federation's Council of Ministers and in the local party organs.

[Question] The zonal management principle, which brings the workers of your organization "into proximity" with the local agencies, is being adopted. Monthly reporting has been abolished, and only the 6-month reporting remains. There will obviously be other measures to relieve you of the domination by paperwork and to improve your work style. What do you regard as the most important thing in this respect?

[Answer] To be able to disseminate know-how. There is good know-how everywhere. We only have to learn how to identify and disseminate it.

I recently returned from an official trip to the Udmurt ASSR. A great deal is being done to improve the level of production and product quality at the Reduktor Association in Ustinov. At what cost, however? In my opinion, those in charge have not given a great deal of thought to this. If they had, would there have been so much wasted work time because of stoppages, absenteeism and illness?

In one of the shops the director and I asked the cadres what needed to be done to rectify the situation. Their answers went right to the root of the problem. Get production onto a smooth and regular basis, they said, and there will be less absenteeism. Today, the shop chief has once again been negotiating with people to work on their days-off. Bring to account those responsible for the draftiness, for the fact that all winter long the temperature was around 10 degrees inside the building, and the number of medical certificates will decrease.... The director and those accompanying him listened to all of this. They seemed to be upset that the people had not spoken up before.

I too gave it some serious thought. After all, the Reduktor is one of the plants with which Udmurtia's Goskomtrud has worked for a whole year. Judging from the reports, our two specialists worked tirelessly to establish order there. And they did establish order, no question about it.... All they needed to do, however, was to visit the neighboring Izhstal and see how meetings with the workers

are organized there. The shop is informed a month in advance that the association's general director will be receiving workers not in his office but right there, at the site, where everything can be explained and demonstrated. And he will not come along. He will be with those who are responsible for specific matters. This is why they request that questions be submitted in advance. It is not just the directors of the plant services who answer. V. Perfilov, chairman of the rayispolkom, G. Chukavin, chief of the passenger motor-transport association, and other workers from the municipal services have been invited to the shops. This experience should be applied at Reduktor.

We are now considerably expanding our practice of assisting the enterprises. We shall be working as members of 2,300 teams. This is a necessity. Republic industry now has greater losses of work time per worker than the national average. We consider it to be our main task to fundamentally improve the situation.

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EDUCATION

YAGODIN DISCUSSES IMPACT OF NEW SCHOOL REFORM

Moscow POLITICHESKOYE SAMOOBRAZOVANIYE in Russian No 7, Jul 86 pp 33-43

[Article by G. Yagodin, corresponding member of USSR Academy of Sciences, USSR Minister of Higher and Secondary Special Education: "Reorganization of the Higher School System and Continuous Education"]

[Text] The Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th party congress contains a well-substantiated conclusion that profound changes in the content of labor under the conditions of the scientific-technical revolution make new, higher demands on the general-educational and vocational training of people. At the present-day stage in the development of Soviet society, Comrade M. S. Gorbachev points out, "a task that has become part of the agenda is the task of creating a single system of continuous education" ("Materialy XVII sъezda KPSS" [Materials of the 27th CPSU Congress], p 48).

This problem is of great national-economic and political importance and presupposes not only the expansion of the sphere of action at all levels in our school system, but also the involvement of millions and millions of Soviet citizens of all ages and occupations in the orbit of organized instruction. We are dealing with a new quality in the development of public education, when public education, to an incomparably greater degree than previously, will participate in a real way both in the development of the main productive force of our society -- the man of labor -- and in the satisfying of the growing spiritual needs of our nation, in developing a new historical type of personality, and in improving the Soviet socialist way of life.

When beginning to create a single system of continuous education, it is important to isolate correctly the decisive link, which makes it possible, to use V. I. Lenin's figurative expression, to drag out the entire chain of forthcoming events. This link, without a doubt, is the higher school system. It is precisely that system that has the decisive role in training pedagogical cadres who are capable of implementing the idea of continuous education, and in developing new forms, methods, and means of instruction and in creating instructional and methodological literature. The higher school system can fulfill this very important role only on the basis of the decisive reorganization of all its work. Its paths have been designated in the documents of the 27th CPSU Congress, and in the draft of the CPSU Central Committee's "Basic Directions in the Reorganization of Higher and Secondary

Special Education in the Country," which was submitted for nationwide discussion.

In recent years the CPSU Central Committee has taken major practical steps that have established the prerequisites for creating a single system of continuous education. They have touched upon all levels in our school system -- from the preschool education of children to refresher training and retraining of specialists.

Events that have become a major achievement of real socialism were the introduction of universal and mandatory secondary education, and the carrying out of the reform of the general-educational and vocational school system. In particular, this pertains to such major steps as the beginning of school instruction for children starting at the age of 6 years; the improvement of the quality of instruction and study of the fundamentals of science; the implementation of computerized universal education; the intensification of the labor education of the schoolchildren; the changeover to universal vocational education for young people; etc.

Much has been done and is being done to develop higher education. Our country has currently in operation approximately 900 higher educational institutions, where more than 5 million students are receiving instruction and more than a half million instructors and scientific workers are engaged in pedagogical and research work. Every year our institutions of higher learning send more than 850,000 graduates to labor collectives. Laboratories at institutions of higher learning carry out approximately one-third of all the research projects in our country's scientific institutions.

The raising of the level of proficiency of workers, managerial cadres, and specialists, and their retraining, have become widespread. Suffice it to state that every year these areas of education encompass 42 million persons. Refresher training and retraining of managerial workers and specialists at the present time are provided by 1500 training centers, including approximately 300 independent institute and approximately 500 schools that are part of institutions of higher learning.

There has also been a substantial expansion of the network of educational institutions that are oriented toward the satisfying of the growing needs of Soviet citizens for the supplementing of their sociopolitical and cultural knowledge -- universities of Marxism-Leninism, people's universities, etc. Various forms of political and economic training attract the bulk of persons desiring that knowledge, and the total number of persons engaged in various types of instruction in the USSR in 1985 was more than 108 million persons, or almost 40 percent of the country's population. That is an impressive scope!

The successes in the development of education promoted the attainment of qualitative shifts in the cultural and technical level of the Soviet nation and the occupational and qualificational structure of the workers. In the makeup of the country's employed population, in 1985 the persons with higher and secondary (complete and incomplete) education constituted 88 percent, as

compared with 43.3 percent in 1960, and the average duration of organized instruction per participant in social production exceeded 10 years. During that period the share of specialists among the workers increased from 10.5 to 26.1 percent. The Soviet Union took first place in the world with regard to the number of engineers, physicians, teachers, and scientific workers. That made it possible to establish firm cadre prerequisites for carrying out the economic, social, and scientific-technical policy of the CPSU, and for implementing its innovative strategy of acceleration.

Nevertheless the impressive quantitative indicators of the development of education in the USSR should not hide the substantial shortcomings in the organization of education. Those shortcomings are attested to, in particular, by the fact that, in our industry and agriculture, the average labor productivity has been lagging considerably behind the highest level of labor productivity that has currently been achieved throughout the world. To a large extent this lag is linked either with the fact that the participants in production have an insufficient level of proficiency, or with the unsatisfactory use of their vocational and general-educational knowledge and practical skills. In turn, the poor organization of labor, once again, gives warning signals about the low competency of those cadres who provide for the economic-organizational and scientific-technical training for production. It is obvious that the lack of the proper intellectual and cadre support is another reason for the slow assimilation in the national economy of the scientific-technical innovations.

When discussing the reasons for this situation, it is necessary to point out at least two groups of unresolved problems in the sphere of education and the practice that has developed with regard to the use of the substantial cadre potential that has been created in the country. On the one hand, the educational institutions of all types up to now have been oriented toward communicating to the students a definite amount of knowledge, which inevitably lags behind the forward edge of scientific-technical progress and which becomes obsolete as modernization of production occurs. The currently existing structure of education by no means conforms to the tasks of assuring the qualitative rise of the vocational and general-educational level of the cadres, and the educational institutions have not taken the proper place in that structure for providing adult education. On the other hand, the existing organization of the labor performed by the workers and specialists, and the distortions that have been permitted with regard to the payment of their labor, have been hindering the completely valid application of the obtained knowledge where that knowledge is most needed by the national economy, and have not been directing the cadres toward the constant raising of their level of on-the-job proficiency. It is not accidental that, according to data as of the beginning of 1985, in industry alone, approximately 3 million specialists were engaged in operations that do not require the special education or proficiency that were acquired by them in higher and secondary special educational institutions. The situation is not much better with regard to the use of knowledge by those specialists who occupy the positions intended for them. In this instance also, for example, among engineers, the fulfillment of functions that are not inherent to their profession frequently takes from 40 to 60 percent of their work time.

The resolution of these problems requires not simply the improvement of the job of instructing and using cadres, but also the radical reorganization of the work carried out by all links in the school system and the creation of a single system of continuous education.

What has been occurring here is a kind of "avalanche-type" growth of scientific-technical and sociopolitical information that precludes "education once and for all." Under conditions when the volumes of active information resources are doubled every 7-10 years, in order for the ever-growing number of participants in production simply to maintain a satisfactory level of competency and preserve the level of proficiency that has been achieved, it is necessary for them constantly to supplement their knowledge both by means of independent classes and on the basis of organized instruction.

The first persons to sense this consequence of the "information explosion" were the workers in chiefly mental labor who were employed in science, education, and administration. However, it is not so much information alone that is being renewed at headlong rates, but rather the technological processes, especially in the so-called science-intensive branches of production, for example, in the electronic industry, where they are replaced every 3-6 years. Consequently, the present-day technological revolution has made, as K. Marx brilliantly predicted, "the recognition of the replacement of labor, and therefore also the largest possible versatility of the workers, a universal law of social production..." (K. Marks [Marx], F. Engels, "Soch." [Works], Vol 23, p 499). The expansion of the sphere of action of the labor replacement law dictates the necessity of converting the raising of the proficiency level and retraining of cadres to a permanent and all-encompassing process.

The dynamic changes in the content of labor go hand in hand with the intellectualization of labor activity. At the present-day stage in the automation of production, which is characterized by the broader and broader introduction of flexible reorganizable systems, robotic complexes, rotor lines, etc., in labor activity there has been a substantial increase in the role of the creative principles, when everything that is stereotypic and programmable is transferred to the technology, while the functions of man in the production process are concentrated in the monitoring, regulation, and readjustment, and the making of decisions in the nonstandard situations. Moreover, the development of electronic computer technology, that powerful amplifier of the human intellect, opens up the era of the automation of engineering, economic, administrative-organizational, and even scientific-research activity. Therefore it is understandable that the intellectualization of labor dictates the necessity not simply of raising the cultural-technical level of the workers, but also sharply increases the value specifically of those creative capabilities and qualities of the cadres which are linked with the acquisition and application of new knowledge, and consequently they require the constant education and self-education of the workers and their mastery of the latest achievements of science and technology.

Finally, the technicalization of everyday life has laid the foundation for favorable changes in the way of life of Soviet citizens, which guarantee not

only an increase in the volume of free time, but also its enrichment with new spiritual content. And together with the tendency toward the intellectualization of people's free time, there has been an increase in the social need for education and an expansion of the opportunities for the constant supplementing of education in the interests of the individual and society, since, as K. Marx pointed out, "the true wealth is the well-developed productive force of all the individuals... It is by no means the work time that will be the gauge of wealth, but, rather, free time" (Marks, K., Engels, F., "Soch.", Vol 46, Part II, p 217). In accordance with the logic of Marxist thought, the intelligent use of free time for the education and self-education of man leads to a situation in which that education, as a very great productive force in society, exerts an effect upon the productive force of labor.

All the tendencies that have been considered are typical of the advancing stage of the scientific-technical revolution, when, after science, education is transformed into an immediate productive force. It is understandable that this transformation is not carried out by itself. It presupposes qualitative shifts in the content, methods, and organization of education, including the change in its interrelationships with other branches of the national economy and spheres of social practice. The resolution of these tasks, then, presupposes the creation of the single system of continuous education in the country.

It is especially important to emphasize the organic link that the idea of continuous education has with the strategic course of the CPSU that is aimed at the acceleration of our country's socioeconomic development. The development of education, and primarily of the higher school system, which has rates that are outstripping even the new technical reorganization of the national economy, is a mandatory requirement for implementing the acceleration strategy, and a leading means of energizing the human factor in production. Simultaneously it is a very important goal in our party's socioeconomic strategy, since the creation of a system of continuous education directly serves the implementation of that glorious communist ideal — the formation of the well-rounded, harmoniously developed individual.

2

The essence of the idea of continuous education was pointed out long ago by folk wisdom: the proverb tells us to "live and learn." However, in pedagogical practice, a diametrically opposite approach has become firmly established. One can arbitrarily call that approach "terminal education," which presupposes that instruction basically must be completed at an early stage in the person's life, a stage that precedes his independent labor and social activity.

The stubborn following of the traditions of terminal education which developed long before the scientific-technical revolution puts an overload on the curricula of the schools and institutions of higher learning, which overload has been dictated by the attempt to teach everything that a person will need to know throughout his lifetime. It leads to cramming, the emphasis on grades, a formal approach, and, finally, to such a fundamental flaw as the

complete separation between school, on the one hand, and life and production, on the other, since the period of training for independent activity is artificially separated from labor, and the student is viewed only as a passive object to be instructed, rather than as an active subject in that instruction. Understandably, this reinforces in the young people an infantile behavior, squelches initiative, and sometimes gives rise to a dependant mentality.

Marxist-Leninist science refutes the mechanistic, static, biologizer views concerning the primordial limitation of the capability of the individual for learning. The increase in the dynamism of all the social processes during our era demonstrates precisely the reverse situation — both the enrichment of the cultural and educational capabilities of the individual, who has the role of an active subject in the changing world, and also the arising of the social necessity for the constant instruction of people. This general social conclusion has been confirmed by psychological and pedagogical research carried out by Soviet scientists, who have proved the potential lack of limitation to man's capabilities.

What, then, are the main features of the system of continuous education?

The first and most important feature is the concept of the individual, the process of the constant and steady ascent to newer and newer heights of cognition and transformation of the world, and, consequently, the rejection of the understanding of general-educational and vocational training only as being a definite stage in a person's development. Hence there evolves a renewed and enriched understanding of the essence of the pedagogical process and of its forms, methods, and content. At the present time instruction -- or, rather, teaching -- must rely on the individual's own active participation. Consequently, every person who is beginning to live his life must be taught first of all how to keep learning. This ability must become just as fundamental a quality of the individual as the primary practical skills to develop his orientation and behavior, for example, the sense of equilibrium. There has also been just as cardinal a change in the functions of the teacher. He is being transformed from a teacher in the literal sense of that word into an organizer of the students' cognitional activity. The content and methods of instruction are becoming open in nature, and oriented toward the future. As a result, the decisive prerequisites are being established for making the transition from a memory school to a school of thought and creativity, and to the person's self-development.

There is yet another absolutely fundamental feature to continuous education — its inseparable interrelationship with labor and with scientific knowledge. Moreover, whereas at early stages of instruction, it includes only individual elements of productive labor, as the person's personality develops teaching, labor, and independent creative cognition begin in an increasingly organic way to become intertwined, alternating in an efficient manner with one another, and then fusing into a single flow. Thus the conditions are created for the transition from a school of coaching to a school of life, the transition from people's activity in instruction from a contemplative point of view to creative activity in instruction, when, with each new stage in the individual's own development, he increases his contribution to the development of society and production.

It is also necessary to isolate such a constituent peculiarity of continuous education as its systems nature. It is not enough to provide the formal succession of all types of educational institutions. One must achieve the deep-seated, essential unity of their work, with a considerably greater variety of ways, forms, methods, and means of education and self-education of the individual. The system changes in education, which have been called upon to guarantee its continuous nature, must encompass all levels of our school system. It will be necessary to make preschool education more advanced. It must become the completely valid threshold to school, which mobilizes and organizes children's inquisitiveness. The general-educational and vocational training institutions, including the technikums and institutions of higher learning, must be oriented toward the more complete and more effective execution of their instructional-educational and social functions in developing the fundamental qualities of the individual, and primarily the solid, basic body of knowledge, capabilities, and strivings for productive labor and the constant replenishing of one's education. In this regard certain questions, in principle, have already been resolved by the school reform, although the renovation of pedagogical practice, as was noted at the party's 27th congress, is still proceeding slowly.

As for educational institutions that provide for adult education — from cadre refresher and retraining institutes, schools, and courses to people's universities and various special-interest lecture series -- they have been entering a period of tempestuous quantitative and qualitative growth, reinterpretation of their content, and the reorganization of the customary forms of their work. A completely realistic and feasible goal is to create, by the end of the current century, for every Soviet citizen all the conditions for continuous self-education, including political, and organizational instruction in conformity with the needs of production and with a consideration of personal needs. For this purpose it will be necessary to put continuous adult education into a single system and to multiply that system's potential substantially, subjugating the use of that potential to the resolution of such absolutely fundamental tasks as the compensation of the gaps in people's basic education; the mobile adaptation of their vocational and general-educational training to the changing conditions of production and of social life; the intellectual, cadre accompaniment (or, rather, outstripping) of scientific-technical innovations; and the guaranteeing of the unlimited creative growth of every individual, and the satisfying of his varied spiritual interests.

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The motivating force, the "motor" for all the work of creating a system of continuous education, must be the higher school. What serves as the prerequisite of this is its considerable advantages, which correspond to the most substantial aspects of the concept of continuous education: the close interrelationship that the instructional process has with science and production; and the concentration in the institutions of higher learning of our most highly qualified scientific-pedagogical cadres.

The special place that the higher school occupies as a creative laboratory for the entire educational system is also reinforced by the rather important circumstance that instruction at institutions of higher learning occurs at a decisive period in a person's life — his transition from youth to maturity. This intensifies the positions of the higher educational institutions as the connecting link between young people's basic general-educational and vocational training and the further instruction of adults. This is especially so, in that the institutions of higher learning traditionally have been not only educational institutions and scientific institutions, but also active centers of the nation's cultural and sociopolitical life, which take active part in the dissemination of scientific knowledge and in the communist education of the workers.

It is no secret, however, that undesirable tendencies that manifested themselves in the national economy in the 1970's and early 1980's have had a detrimental effect also upon the development of the higher school. There was an underevaluation of the new requirements that the scientific-technical revolution make on higher education. As a result, the problems of providing the economy with specialists and of developing the research activities at institutions of higher learning continued to be resolved chiefly on an extensive basis. Hence the increase in the graduation of cadres without showing the proper concern for the quality of their training, the reduction in the effectiveness of the scientific-research projects at the institutions of higher learning, as well as the engineer shortage, which has been aggravated by the decrease in the prestige of their labor. Because of the "residual" approach to the allocation of funds and resources for the development of the material-technical base of the higher school system, there has been a dragging out of the developmental period for many higher educational institutions that were created in the first half of the 1960's and the 1970's, and several of them to this very day have not been providing for the high-grade theoretical and practical training of cadres. There have also been structural disproportions in the development of higher education.

It must be admitted that the elimination of these and other shortcomings has been restrained by red-tape methods of administering the higher school system on the part of USSR Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education and other links in the administrative apparatus, which frequently have replaced realistic actions for improving the instructional-educational and research processes by the formal, administrative regulation of them, which shackles the initiative of the instructors, the scientists, and even the young students. A situation has been created in which the successes of past years, as it were, have shielded the difficulties that have newly arisen. As a result, the problems in the sphere of higher education have grown more rapidly than they have been resolved, and the higher school itself has been transformed from a catalyst of socioeconomic development into a bottleneck in that development, and that has had a detrimental effect upon the development of the national economy.

After the April 1985 CPSU Central Committee Plenum and the June 1985 conference at the party's Central Committee to deal with questions of scientific-technical progress, which gave a well-principled, Leninist evaluation of the situation that had been created, the collectives in the

higher schools and the party organizations of educational institutions began with renewed force to extend the search for ways to achieve the fundamental improvement of the quality of specialist training and to improve the effectiveness of the research carried out at institutions of higher learning. That work received the support of the CPSU Central Committee, and the local party agencies, the scientists and specialists in the national economy, and representatives of the broad public engaged actively in it. The recommendations that were prepared as a result of the collective efforts were taken into consideration in the CPSU Central Committee's draft of the "Basic Directions in the Reorganization of Higher and Secondary Special Education in the Country."

As has been indicated by the discussion of that document representing the party's creative thinking, the concept of reorganization, while drawing on all that is best in the accumulated experience of socialist construction in the sphere of education, considers to be of paramount importance the advanced approaches that have been called upon to guarantee a sharp turning point in the work of the institutions of higher learning. Attesting to the complete support of the ideas of reorganization within the collectives at the educational institutions, the discussion of the CPSU Central Committee's draft will help not only to supplement and refine its individual principles, but also to mobilize the internal reserves for carrying out the planned innovations, and to activate the creative energy of thousands and thousands of workers in the higher school system. This makes it possible to speak with greater conviction about the attainability of the goals within the shortest possible periods of time.

The thorough integration of higher education, production, and science must become the base for the reorganization. The series of integrational measures will make possible the substantial enrichment of the varied relationships that have developed among the institutions of higher learning, enterprises, and scientific institutions, and will give them modern economic and organizational forms. Key importance in this regard is attached to the implementation of the principle stated in the Political Report of the Central Committee to the 27th party congress, concerning the need to change the interrelationships that the higher school system has with branches of the national economy and to intensify their mutual self-interest in raising the level of training of cadres and in making better use of them in production.

A major step in this matter is the changeover to the targeted instruction of instruction, the development of that instruction on the basis of contracts between the higher educational institutions and the branch ministries, departments, production associations, and other organizations. These contracts will define the pledges taken by both contracting parties, will guarantee the priority of the interests of the consumer in determining the content of the cadre education, and will stipulate the partial restitution of the expenditures for their training by the branches of the economy.

It is substantially important for all this work to begin not "from scratch," because many things in that work have already been thoroughly tested by life itself. One example might be the large-scale experiment in organizing the targeted intensive training of specialists in new, promising trends in science

and technology, which experiment encompassed approximately 50 institutions of higher learning in the RSFSR. Especially good results were achieved by the conducting of that experiment in Leningrad, where it was made an organic part of the "Intensification-90" program being carried out under the guidance of the party's oblast organization.

The central, pivotal task of the reorganization is the fundamental improvement of the quality of cadre training. Today's students -- tomorrow's specialists -- must be armed with the most up-to-date knowledge and with fundamental practical skills, must have a complete mastery of advanced technology and technological processes, and must have a broad cultural horizon, well-developed creative properties, the ability to think about economics in a new way, initiative, and socialist entrepreneurship.

Something that has become a tangible hindrance on the path of improving the training process is the unjustifiable overgrowth in the list of specialties at the institutions of higher learning. That list has failed for a long time to conform to the actual structure of the division of the labor performed by the cadres, and it has reinforced the departmental approach and the attempt to train specialists to fill a specific position. But under the conditions of the new technical reorganization, the national economy now needs, as it has never previously needed, cadres with a broad area of specialization, who are capable of adapting rapidly to the changes in production and, in a time-responsive manner, to assimilate the achievements of scientific-technical progress and to take the role of active implementers of those achievements. Therefore, among the first-priority measures in the reorganization, one that stands out with regard to its importance is the reconsideration of the structure of higher education, the consolidation of the list of specialties, the creation of the prerequisites for the deeper fundamentalization of the instructional process.

At the same time the system of instruction at the institutions of higher learning must not lose its directedness toward a specific sphere in the vocational activity of its graduates. That is why the changeover to the training of cadres with a broad range of specialization will be combined with the substantial expansion of the rights of the educational institutions in determining the content of the education, the introduction of additional mandatory and elective disciplines, and various special courses: approximately 15 percent of the total volume of the classroom work will be allocated for these purposes in the educational plans. The increase in the flexibility of higher education will also be promoted by the organizing of differentiated instruction of specialists with a consideration of their specific functions: those engaged in operational-production, planning-and-designing, scientific-research, and other operations. That will make it possible, for example, to improve substantially the training of research-and-development engineers for science-intensive production entities and for design and research subdivisions by transferring the students who have manifested creative capabilities to individual educational plans with the extension of the instruction period by one year. The instruction will be carried out both within the walls of the institution of higher learning, and in the form of probationary work at advanced enterprises.

In the document of the CPSU Central Committee, a leading place has been assigned to engineer-technical education. And that is completely understandable, since the engineer is the central figure in the scientific-technical revolution. However, the improvement of the training of technical specialists would be inconceivable without the involvement of the humanities in their education, since, in material production and other spheres of social practice, what comes into the foreground today is the human factor. Profound changes will also have to be introduced into the instruction of the students in the humanities and social studies. Their training must be brought closer to practical life, to the specific tasks of the social development of the labor collectives and the entire social and cultural sphere of our society.

Many participants in the discussion of the draft of the CPSU Central Committee document have emphasized the persistent need for cardinal changes in the organization of classes at the institutions of higher learning, the rejection of obsolete stereotypes, and the assimilation of the achieved of advanced pedagogical thinking and practice. It is proposed to shift the center of gravity in instruction from the extensive, descriptive forms to the intensive, individualized types of educational work.

In the light of this, it will be necessary to reduce the volume of mandatory auditorium-type classes, and to tighten up the traditional lecture-type courses while simultaneously developing improved laboratory-type practical projects that assure the firm acquisition of knowledge and the development of the mental and physical skills required for the practical application of that knowledge. The broader conducting of classes based on production, the improvement of the entire system of practical instruction, will make it possible to resolve the task of providing every future specialist with a work category and the experience in vocational activity in job assignments that are critical for the specialty being acquired. In the arsenal of instructional methods, the predominant place will be occupied by problem-oriented instruction, the playing of job games, and the execution of comprehensive yearly and graduation projects based on real production and research topics.

Something that must become a powerful means for intensifying and industrializing the instructional process in the higher schools is modern electronic computer technology. The task that has been assigned is not only to train every graduate from a higher educational institution for vocational activity at an automated work station, but also, while the student is still in the process of instruction, to put information science and electronics completely at the service of improving the quality of the classes. The development of automated instructional systems and shared computer-data networks, the creation of banks of knowledge, and the expansion of access to them thanks to the equipping of the higher educational institutions with personal computers, and thanks to the broad placement of computer terminals in auditoriums and the academic departments, libraries, and dormitories, will enable the students to study more productively and will promote the development in them of new efficiency in scientific-technical thinking, and their mastery of the methods of systems analysis and modeling and of the practical skills required for the prompt processing of large volumes of information.

An absolutely mandatory condition for the complete mastery of the occupation that has been selected is the stubborn, purposeful, independent instructional work performed by the future specialists. The underestimation that one still encounters with respect to this pedagogical principle, the lessening of the exactingness toward students with respect to the quality of instruction, and the artificial retention within the walls of the higher educational institutions of those who cannot learn or who do not want to learn, have led to tangible social costs that have been caused by the insufficient competency on the part of a certain number of graduates from higher educational institutions.

In order to preclude the race for greater academic success for purposes of show, the dependence of the number of instructors upon the size of the student contingent will be eliminated. An important incentive for academic success will be provided by additional benefits for the best graduates, including a higher level of payment for their labor upon graduation from the higher educational institution. And in order to maintain the constant self-interest of the cadres in supplementing and renewing their knowledge, the certifying of specialists will be introduced. That certification will reflect the results of their efforts to raise their proficiency level or to be retrained, and it is planned to take more complete consideration of those results when resolving the questions of advancing the cadres up the personnel ladder and determining the size of the wages.

The orientation on increasing the flexibility and effectiveness of the instructional process at institutions of higher learning is one of the reasons for the need to reorganize the methodological guidance of the personnel training. That guidance will have to be freed of the costs incurred by the bureaucratic approach, and of the excessive regulation on the part of the administrative apparatus. This will be promoted by the creation, on the basis of the leading institutions of higher learning, of instructional-methodology associations for the various groups of specialties, which associations are responsible for developing instructional plans and curricula, the preparation of training literature, and the raising of the proficiency level of the instructors. The prototypes for such centers are the Moscow institutes of steel and alloys, petroleum and gas, textile institute, mining institute, and others, which have set up the effective coordination of instructional-methodology and scientific-research work at higher educational institutions and schools throughout the country that have the same area of specialization.

The reorganization of the higher school system, the entire atmosphere in which Soviet citizens live and work, create favorable conditions for raising the level of the Marxist-Leninist education and education of young specialists. Ideological maturity is an inseparable feature in a specialist. In addition, the specialist, as a rule, fulfills the function of educator, of propagandist, in the labor collective. And therefore we must rid ourselves as quickly as possible of everything that has not proved its value in the practical situation in educational work -- we must rid ourselves of the chase to carry out massive educational measures, to the detriment of their rate of results, we must rid ourselves of tiresome edification and scholastic theorizing, of providing petty guardianship for young students, and of all kinds of dogmatism.

We must continue to keep in the foreground the intensification of the ideological effect exerted by instruction, primarily in the social sciences, upon the consciousness and conduct of our student body. Young specialists must gain a thorough mastery of revolutionary theory as an integral teaching, and must see it as the unshakeable basis for their practical creative activity in the work sector that has been assigned to them. This is the approach that guides the curriculum commission at USSR Minvuz [Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education], which commission has been called upon to make the content of the courses in social studies conform to the documents of the party's 27th congress.

Tremendous reserves for increasing the effectiveness of education lie in increasing the rate of social and political participation of the young people themselves, and in developing all forms of their spontaneous activities. The Komsomol committees at the educational institutions have been called upon to act as the initiator in this regard.

That is exactly how the situation was set up at the Lvov Polytechnical Institute, where the director's office and the party committee have shown constant concern for developing a strong group of Komsomol activists, who, by themselves, on their own initiative, have been resolving at a high level the questions of healthy, well-organized everyday life in the dormitories, have been providing meaningful recreational opportunities for the students, showing constant interest in their educational matters, and have achieved the transformation of the students design bureau into a large-scale and respectable scientific institution. However, in many educational institutions the fulfillment of the decree of the CPSU Central Committee concerning the further improvement of the party's guidance of the Komsomol, and the intensification of the role of the Komsomol in the communist education of the youth, has proven to have been directed into unjustifiably regulated channels. In the course of the reorganization it will be necessary to correct this situation, and to expand considerably the limits of student self-government.

The Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee has emphasized with particular force the importance of individual educational work. Carrying out that work in a purposeful way is the duty of every instructor at an institution of higher learning, who has been called upon not only to convey his knowledge to the new generation of specialists, but also to share his experience with them, to delve into the interests and needs of the young people, and to arm them with reliable landmarks in life. In the final analysis, all the educational work in the higher school system must be turned toward the real problems of social development, and a reliable base must be created for assuring the ideological support of the party's course that is aimed at the acceleration of the country's socioeconomic development.

The forward edge of the struggle to implement the party's principles concerning the acceleration of scientific-technical progress runs through science. Major unused capabilities for further increasing the contribution to the development of scientific thought are today at the disposal of the higher school system.

Suffice it to state that, although 35 percent of all our country's scientific-pedagogical cadres are concentrated in institutions of higher learning, including almost half the doctors of sciences, less than 10 percent of the appropriations for the fulfillment of scientific projects is channeled into the conducting of research there. Entire branch groups of higher educational institutions that have at their disposal large detachments of scientists remain on the periphery of energetic scientific activity. For example, all the 200 pedagogical institutions of higher learning execute a smaller volume of research than Moscow University alone.

The reorganization is supposed to create the conditions for a large leap forward in increasing the effectiveness of the scientific-research projects at higher educational institutions, for increasing their volume by a factor of at least 2-2.5. This requires increasing the efficiency of the structure of science at higher educational institutions, and primarily the correlation among fundamental research, applied projects, and experimental-design development. Special attention will be devoted to reinforcing the final link in the "research to development to introduction" chain, which determines the rates at which the results of the scientific search are brought to the production level.

Already the higher schools are taking active part in creating an economic-organizational mechanism that promotes the overcoming of the lack of coordination among scientific efforts at the higher educational institutions, in the academy system, and in the branches, and also promotes the most rapid, widescale use of scientific-technical innovations in economic practice. Within the near future it will be necessary to adjust that mechanism in such a way as to assure that it guarantees the concentration of the best scientific forces in the development of the most important subject matter, reduces to the minimum the gap between the conception and the practical carrying out of the new scientific ideas, and increases the mutual self-interest of the scientists at the higher educational institutions and the enterprise specialists in creatively cooperating in the job of accelerating the rates of scientific-technical progress. And, finally, all the questions of reorganizing scientific work in the higher school system will have to be resolved in direct connection with the improvement of the quality of specialist training and with the training of the new generation of scientists. What serves here as a concrete guide for action is the principle in the Political Report to the effect that, starting in the first years of instruction, the students must be involved in research work, and must participate in introducing the results of that work into production. Only in that manner is it possible to educate real scientists and creative specialists.

The fate of the reorganization is being decided by the scientific-pedagogical cadres. This determines the importance of the additional measures that will have to be carried out to improve the qualitative composition, to raise the level of scientific and pedagogical proficiency of the professors and instructors at the higher educational institutions, and to create favorable housing, everyday-living, and material conditions for them. The entire system of training and certifying scientific-pedagogical cadres will be raised to a new level. For that purpose it is planned to reinforce the postgraduate system, to open up doctorates, to introduce long-term probationary work for

instructors of special disciplines in production, and to make changes in the procedure for awarding scientific titles. It is planned to improve the organization and payment of the labor performed by instructors and other workers at institutions of higher learning, as well as their social security. At the same time, there has been a substantial intensification of the demands that are made on scientific-pedagogical cadres for the quality of instruction and education of specialists, the effectiveness of the scientific projects, a creative attitude toward the job, and the observance of pedagogical ethics. The changeover to the competitive filling of all professor and instructor positions will become an effective lever in the struggle against stagnation and complacency in the academic departments of institutions of higher learning.

An important factor for assuring the success of the reorganization is the improvement of the system of administering the higher schools. That system must be subordinated to the implementation of a single state policy in the sphere of higher education, and must guarantee the expansion of the independence in the outlying areas in the resolution of current questions, the increase in the effectiveness of centralized planning, instructional-methodology, and scientific-organizational guidance of the higher educational institutions, and the further intensification of the democratic principles in the practice of administration. Much here is determined by the reorganization of the content, style, and methods of the work performed by USSR Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education, the rejection of obsolete stereotypes in thinking and in practice, and the most rapid turning of the cadres in the administrative apparatus of the higher schools toward the new tasks.

The first practical steps undertaken in this direction have already been yielding their positive results. There has been a substantial reduction in the paper flow; useless conferences and meetings have been eliminated; and the structure of the administrative apparatus is being reconsidered and simplified. Something that serves to increase the scientific substantiation of the administrative decisions is the creation of the automated administrative system at USSR Minvuz, with a series of tasks for modeling the basic processes in the sphere of higher education. The reorganization of the Scientific-Research Institute of the Problems of the Higher School System has been begun. That institute is supposed to become the leading scientific center for the creative study of the ways to improve the quality of specialist training, etc.

In the CPSU Central Committee's draft "Basic Directions for the Reorganization of Higher and Secondary Special Education in the Country," it is emphasized that the state assumes the obligation of providing for all Soviet citizens the favorable conditions for the constant raising of their proficiency level on the basis of the creation and development of a single system of continuous education. The higher schools are in the center of this system. They are responsible for training highly qualified instructor cadres at all levels, from preschool institutions to institutions of higher learning, have been called upon to arm the specialists not only with fundamental knowledge, but also the practical skills required for renewing the knowledge that they have received, and they must deepen their influence upon all forms of raising people's proficiency level.

The increase in the economic role of education objectively leads to a change in its place in the system of the branches of the national economy. In the country's single economic complex, one sees the development of a powerful educational complex for reproducing the labor resources and for improving the occupational and qualificational structure of the participants in social production. A task that moves onto the agenda is the task of increasing the priority importance of education, primarily the higher school, among the branches of the economy, and the concentration there of a growing share of the material and spiritual resources of society. The only true resolution of this task consists in achieving those rates of development of higher education that would make it possible ahead of time to form the cadre prerequisites for the acceleration of scientific-technical progress.

Simultaneously there has been an increase in the social significance of education in the system of fundamental values of the socialist way of life. The development of the needs of Soviet citizens for education, like the creation of the conditions for satisfying them, is becoming one of the leading directions in the social policy of the party and the state. In turn, this dictates the need for profound changes in the content, organization, and structure of the cultural and educational sphere, and in intensifying its orientation on the individual and on his complete and harmonious development. Those are the objective dialectics in the strategy of acceleration: every step along the path of carrying it out raises to a new level the creative capabilities of socialism, as it moves closer to the communist future. The implementation of this law of social development, then, is served by the fulfillment of the task of reorganizing the higher school system, the creation of a single system of continuous education.

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EDUCATION

DEPUTY MINISTER ON BETTER VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE

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[Article by F. Shtykalo, USSR Deputy Minister of Education, under rubric "Labor Resources and Labor Productivity": "The School and the Socioeconomic Development of the Villmodernin"]

[Excerpts] The indoctrinating of industriousness is the formation of the chief quality of the human personality. It is precisely on the basis of industriousness that the life both of society as a whole and the individual person is constructed. Under socialism it is only labor -- whether it be physical or mental -- that defines both the honor and dignity of people. That is our principle of social justice. We have been given the task of achieving a situation in which all the school students and graduates, even before the beginning of their labor activity, have a mastery of a definite occupation. It can be said that the school system in this regard has moved noticeably ahead. One has seen the active development and reinforcement of the cooperation between the school and production. In the curriculum of the 11-year school there has been an increase in the number of hours for labor and vocational training; mandatory time has been set aside for socially necessary labor outside the classroom; and practical production work has been introduced. A list of specialties in the mass occupations has been defined for students in the general educational schools. The base for the labor and vocational training of the school children is being reinforced. At the present time, throughout the country, approximately 3000 production-training centers (UPK) are in operation, as well as more than 6000 training shops that have been created at the enterprises themselves. For the country as a whole, 97.7 percent of all the students in grades 9 through 11 are undergoing intensified labor instruction; of them, 41.8 percent are receiving this instruction in the school system itself, 44.5 percent at interschool production-training centers, and 11.4 percent at training shops (training sectors) at industrial enterprises, kolkhozes, and sovkhozes.

At the present time, base enterprises have been assigned to every school and production-training center. This gives a new character to the union between school and production. And what is important here is not only the fact that the school is getting closer to production, but also that the managers of the base enterprises are making a turn toward the school. The enterprises are now not simply the sponsors, but also, together with the school, are active,

responsible organizers of the labor and vocational development of the students. Every labor collective exerts a completely unique sociopolitical and ideological-indoctrinal effect upon the upcoming generation. The reforms in the Soviet school system, as has been defined by the reform documents, are of a nationwide nature. That means that every link in the state apparatus, and all branches in the national economy, are involved in the carrying out of the reform.

A very important intransitory task of the Soviet school system is to provide the upcoming generation with a thorough and lasting knowledge of the principles of the sciences, and to develop in the students the necessary work habits and mental ability to employ that knowledge in the practical situation, and to form a materialistic view of the world. There has been an improvement in the school system of the students' vocational orientation: there has been an intensification of the polytechnical directedness of the content of education; and more attention is being paid to the practical and laboratory classes and to the technological application of the laws of physics, chemistry, biology, and the other sciences. Starting with the 1985-1986 school year the curriculum has included a new subject, "Principles of Information Science and Electronic Computers"; and it is planned to carry out the broad application of computers in the teaching processes as the schools are provided with them. A new subject, "Principles of Production. Choosing an Occupation" is being introduced.

The content of the Basic Directions for the reform has opened up for all the workers in education a broad vista for fruitful creative activity. Two years have passed since the reform was enacted. That is not a long period of time, but it has already demonstrated the viability of the reform and its great significance in our country's socioeconomic development.

We would like to cite only one example, as applicable to rural localities. It is well known that the basic figure in the rural area is the mechanizer. In the 1984-1985 school year, out of 2.1 million students in grades 9 through 11, 1.05 million were working to master skills as mechanizers. At the end of the school year, approximately 500,000 graduates were certified as tractor operators, and many of them are working successfully in agricultural production.

The question of the material base for the labor instruction and vocational training of schoolchildren in the educational system was viewed until recently as the need to create an additional number of training shops, production-training centers, field camps, etc. This trend in the organization of labor training played its positive role. As a result of the steps that were taken, the number of interschool production-training centers increased to 2756, including an increase to 986 in rural localities. There has been an increase in the share of the students engaged in work on the basis of the production-training centers in Belorussian SSR, for example, to 84.5 percent. There has been a slight increase in the number of students who are receiving training at the industrial enterprises, kolkhozes, and sovkhozes themselves in Estonian SSR, where their share has come to 23.1 percent, and in RSFSR, 17.3 percent. However, the percentage of students who are engaged in work on the basis of

school shops continues to be too high: for the country as a whole, that share is 41.8 percent; in Georgian SSR, 72.3 percent; and Turkmen SSR, 68.6 percent.

The figures that have been given attest to the fact that the training-material base in the labor and vocational training of the students is still weak and fails to meet the requirements of the school reform with regard to the vocational training of the students at a modern level. Questions that are being resolved extremely slowly include the questions of the efficient outfitting of the training areas with equipment, the increasing their handling capacity, and the creation of additional work stations. And yet the introduction into the training process of the mandatory vocational training of the students and the organizing of their socially beneficial, productive labor necessitates the considerable reinforcement of the training base in production itself.

As of the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year, in order to organize the socially beneficial, productive labor and vocational training of the students, more than 900,000 work stations were set aside, including more than 530,000 at industrial enterprises. However, in a number of rayons throughout the country, insufficient attention is still being devoted to creating and modernizing them. In a significant number of shops and sectors that are being set aside by the enterprises for organizing the students' work, and at the interschool vocational-training centers, the equipment that is being used for these purposes includes obsolete models of machine tools and other technology, which frequently have been written off and are unsuitable for instruction or labor. Raw and other materials and tools are not being allocated in the necessary quantity. There is a lack of precision in the planning of production orders for articles and in the definition of the objects of labor. In order to organize truly efficient, productive labor -- and this is precisely the task that has been assigned -- it is necessary to have an efficient work station for every student, and one that is equipped not only with special equipment, but also with high-quality raw materials for producing the output, articles, and parts that the country needs. The requirement is that the student's work station must be set up not only for purposes of instruction, as was the situation previously, but also for genuine productive labor as an active component of the students' vocational training.

The work stations for the students must be equipped with a consideration of their age and the rules governing work safety, production sanitation, and hygiene. The administrators of the public educational agencies and the schools must carry out a periodical monitoring to assure the creation of work stations in the quantity necessary to provide them to all the students in the respective grades and age groups, and to organize the beneficial, productive labor and vocational training of all the students in the upper grades. Obviously, the basic requirements concerning the certification of work stations in production must also extend in principle to the students' work stations. The only distinction can be in the providing of tools and certain other equipment in the student category. By operating at least 2-3 shifts at each work station, during the course of a week it is possible to train several students.

The organizing of the students' labor and vocational training in the production situation itself has several advantages. First, the students are directly involved in the life of the work collectives, they learn how to work on real ("adult") equipment under the guidance of experienced foremen; secondly, one does not encounter the problem of searching for projects to which one should direct the productive labor, since, in the production situation, there is no unproductive labor; thirdly, every student senses his participation in the goals and tasks of the collective labor and in its results; and, fourthly, at the industrial enterprise, kolkhoz, or sovkhoz, there is always the opportunity to become acquainted with modern technology and advanced technological processes. It is precisely there that the most favorable conditions are created for introducing the young people to the socialist production relations and the modern forms of organizing collective and individual labor. In the process of instruction itself, the students develop their first ideas of technological discipline. Moreover, the concept of discipline is treated in the broad sense: it involves the discipline in the instructional labor itself, discipline at the student's work station, and labor discipline proper — the observation of high production efficiency, the fulfillment of the quota assignments.

The unity of the actions of the school, the family, the labor collective, and the public in the work of preparing students for life and labor makes it possible to strive for steady positive results in the formation of young people's active vital position, their love and respect for the work of a vegetable husbandryman and to their paternal homeland, and their striving to multiply the riches of their native land and to participate personally in the further development of agriculture of the Nonchernozem Zone and in the strengthening of its economy. It is not by accident today that 80 percent of the kolkhoz specialists are school graduates, and 60 percent of the mechanizers are younger than 30 years of age. There has been a change in the social appearance of the rural area. A cultural and sports complex has been constructed there. The village is getting younger, is growing, is being populated by literate, educated people; the standard of living of the rural resident has been rising.

In the successful introduction of the contract and cost accountability into the student production brigades, the administrators of such brigades, acting on the part of the school system and the farms, and specialists have been called upon to play an important role. However, many of them are not yet attempting to introduce the new forms of organizing the labor in the student brigades, and have been refraining from using economic incentives in those collectives. One sees the effect of the blind concern of the older persons, the fear of putting the schoolchildren in a difficult economic situation, and, in principle, the effect of inertia. All this has been restraining the further democratization of the students' self-government of production, and the development of the students' independence and labor and political participation, and has been lessening their vital interest in their specific job.

The questions of labor and vocational instruction, of the organization of the socially beneficial, productive labor of the students in the rural school system, have their specific nature. A number of specialists feel that in the

rural locality the activity of the production-training centers is less productive, since most of the students, after learning a specialty at the rayon center, go to the city. The task of training vegetable and animal husbandrymen, combine operators, and drivers, in their opinion, are resolved more successfully at the kolkhozes and sovkhozes themselves, where the students live and study. It is probably impossible to make a completely unambiguous judgment about these forms of training the cadres who are needed in the rural area. Everything depends upon the specifically created conditions, the organization of the process of training the students, and other factors.

The first rural production-training center was created in the Ukraine, in Gayvoronskiy Rayon, Kirovograd Oblast. A large amount of experience in organizing the training of mechanizer cadres for the rural area has been accumulated in Belorussia. The republic has 188 rural production-training centers in operation. At those centers, more than 70,000 schoolchildren are studying agricultural subjects and the specialties that are needed for the agroindustrial complex. The workers of BSSR Ministry of Education feel that the labor instruction and indoctrination is especially promising at the production-training centers for students in the relatively unfilled rural schools where grades 9 and 10 consist of 15-20 students. In their opinion, at the rural production-training centers it is possible to create a stronger material base than in the schools, to concentrate the technology there, to use it efficiently, to select and assign the best instructor cadres, to raise the level of organization of the teaching process and of productive labor, and to give the schoolchildren a broader choice of occupations. In principle one cannot fail to agree with these arguments. The labor instruction of students at rural production-training centers in Belorussia is combined with the organization of their productive labor in the student production brigades at their place of residence.

The rural production-training centers in the republic were created with the aid of the kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and other interested enterprises, as a rule, on the basis of the training-course centers of the former rayon associations of Selkhoztekhnika, and in individual instances new buildings were constructed. The areas of specialization in the labor training are determined on the basis of the needs in the particular region for cadres in the particular occupation, the capabilities of the base enterprises, the number of schools, the number of students in the upper classes, the remoteness of the educational institutions from the production-training centers, etc. At the production-training centers, as a rule, the students come from six to eight schools in the rayon. In order to bring them to the training center and then back home, the executive committees of the rayon Soviets of People's Deputies assign special transportation means. The classes with the students at the production-training centers are conducted by experts in production training, specialists from the base enterprises, and labor teachers.

At the production-training centers in Belorussia it has become traditional to have meetings between the students and advanced production workers, labor holidays and rallies for students desiring to enter PTU [vocational-technical schools] or to keep working in the rural areas, contests to find the best person in each occupation, competitions among plowmen and among animal

husbandrymen, official ceremonies initiating the graduates as workers or grain-growers, etc. A system of measures is being developed to assign young people to rural areas: the indoctrination of the students in the labor traditions of the people living in their area, the instilling in them of a sense of being tied to their native land, and of love for the agricultural occupations.

The work being carried out by the public-education agencies, the pedagogical collectives at the schools and the production-training centers, and by the administrators of farms in the republic has been yielding good results: more than 25 percent of the students, upon graduation from school, enter into agricultural production; there has been an annual increase in the number of school graduates who have found jobs in agricultural specialties that they have learned at production-training centers.

The experience of the Belorussians, perhaps, does not give completely convincing proof that the selected form of training cadres for the farms in the rayon is the most effective. At the same time there are no justifications for feeling that the rural production-training centers have not been resolving the problem of training skilled cadres in a broad area of specialization to meet the needs of agricultural production. Insufficient time has passed to enable us to make any definite conclusions. It is also necessary to take into consideration the specifics of various regions in the country, their peculiarities, the level of organization of instruction, etc.

The board of governors of the Rodina Kolkhoz, Ketovskiy Rayon, Kurgan Oblast, for example, jointly with the school administrators, developed a five-year plan for training future cadres in the mass occupations for the economy. The plan stipulates the development of those cadres, beginning with the lowest grades. A vocational-guidance lab has been created at the school. The students have been assigned to various links as vegetable husbandrymen, animal husbandrymen, construction and repair workers, workers in personal services, mechanizers, etc. Classrooms have been created for training animal husbandrymen and mechanizers in a broad area of specialization. Every year the kolkhoz provides the school with ten equipped work stations: five in animal husbandry and five in the machine-tractor shop. The problem of training the worker cadres on that kolkhoz has been resolved.

However, the general tendencies are such that agriculture still has a lack of skilled cadres. For that reason on a number of kolkhozes and sovkhozes and animal farms, the new equipment is not being used and even that machinery that is being used does not provide the proper effect. The shortage of tractor operators and drivers has been hampering the conversion of the equipment to double-shift operation. Many labor-extensive processes in agriculture have been poorly mechanized, especially in animal husbandry, where certain processes are executed manually. All this naturally leads to a situation in which many types of work in agriculture are not attractive to young people, and leads to the learning of occupations which cannot be used in the specific conditions, and this has been restraining the increase in the cultural and technical training of cadres from among the schoolchildren. The conclusion from this is that, when developing the new type of rural workers, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the scientific-technical

revolution is making increased demands not only on the specialties of rural workers which have already been well established, but also those which will appear in the immediate future by virtue of their conformity to the industrial type of production.

An unfavorable situation with regard to the training of skilled cadres for the rural area has developed in Kirghiz SSR. The local party and Soviet agencies, the KiSSR Ministry of Education, and the public-education agencies in the outlying areas have done very little to organize the work of reinforcing the material base for the labor and vocational instruction of the students. In such rayons in that republic as Moskovskiy, Kantskiy, Issyk-Kulskiy, and Sokulukskiy rayons, and in a number of others, the schoolchildren are used as additional manpower basically in seasonal operations and in the carrying out of various manual operations. The basic tools employed in their labor are hoes (and sometimes even they are nonexistent) and their own hands. In the republic, out of 252 school labor and recreational camps, only 24 have a permanent base; the others have primitive temporary sheds. According to our computations, the national economy of Kirghizia requires cadres in the basic mass occupations in 82 specialties, but the training of schoolchildren is being conducted in only 15 of them.

This inattention to school problems by no means pertains only to Kirghizia. In Ashkhabad Oblast (Uzbek SSR) and Chernigov Oblast (Ukrainian SSR) the situation is also poor with regard to the construction of field camps for student production brigades and labor and recreation camps for students. In Belorussian SSR, despite the overall favorable situation with regard to the reinforcement of the training-material base for the labor and vocational training of the students, individual rayons have failed to resolve many problems. For example, at the Kozlovshchina Interschool Production-Training Center (Shuchinskiy Rayon, Grodno Oblast), the leading area of specialization in the vocational instruction of the students is mechanizer/tractor-operator. However, at the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year there was not a single tractor there that could be moved. Located alongside the production-training center is a vocational-technical school that is well equipped with agricultural technology and that trains tractor operators, but none of the administrators of the production-training center could even think of bringing the schoolchildren there. The reason for that was that the center and the school belonged to different departments. On certain kolkhozes and sovkhozes in Grodno Oblast, students in the upper classes are still not allowed to receive instruction on or to operate tractors. The reason given is that certain legislation prohibits this. The administrators of the local agencies should be aware that this painful problem has been resolved in conformity with the Statute Governing the Student Production Brigade. The crux of the matter is that the farms are not assigning mentors, and without them it is impossible to give instruction to students under the age of 16 years in operating the tractors.

An unfavorable situation with the organization of the labor and vocational training of students has developed in many schools in Navoi Oblast, Uzbek SSR. Many schools there make no attempt to cooperate with the base farms, and, similarly, the farms make no attempt to cooperate with the schools. There is a lack here of training centers for students even in the best, advanced

kolkhozes and sovkhozes. The administrators of the public-education agencies and the farms put their basic reliance upon the school shops. In and of itself, the idea could yield positive results if those shops were properly equipped for labor and vocational training. However, this is by no means the fact. Out of 305 schools in the oblast, only 57 have equipment for instructing the students in the specialty of fitter, and those are mostly in the urban schools. In the rural schools, however, the training-material base for instructing the students in the occupation of mechanizer with a broad area of specialization and in other occupations, essentially speaking, has not been created. One should scarcely expect that the only agencies that can cope with this task are the public-education agencies. Without the mobilization of the efforts of all the interested organizations and the support of the party and Soviet agencies in the oblast, it will be impossible to resolve the problem creating here the material base for the vocational instruction of the schoolchildren.

In recent years, in many parts of the country, for purposes of coordinating the efforts of all the departments and departmental organizations that are interested in school matters, interdepartmental councils or commissions were created. They are headed, as a rule, by the deputy chairmen of the executive committees of the local Soviets. An interdepartmental commission is operating successfully under the Perm Oblast Executive Committee. Similar commissions have been created in every rayon and city in the oblast, and their work has had a positive effect upon the state of affairs in public education. An interdepartmental council is operating well in Latvian SSR. However, in many other parts of the country, such councils have yielded their positions or have completely stopped their operation, and this undoubtedly is a poor situation, since the resolution of the tasks posed by the school reform is a nationwide job and the educational agencies cannot carry out that job by themselves.

It is necessary to understand yet another truism: however valuable the decisions that are made at the upper echelons of administration, they will not result in anything without the active and creative participation of the workers in the rayon links who are directly linked with school instruction and agricultural production. It is precisely the rayon department of public education and the RAPO [rayon agroindustrial association] which must help the school administrators to become the chief organizer of the collective of teachers, students, and the base enterprise. If the RAPO and the rayon departments of public education set up the job in such a way that the work of the agricultural enterprises in providing labor instruction, indoctrination, and vocational training for the students corresponds to the production achievements, then one can hope for success.

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GENERAL

RUTGAYZER REVIEWS BOOK ON REAL INCOME OF POPULATION

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[Review by V. M. Rutgayzer of book "Semya i narodnoye blagosostoyaniye v razvitym sotsialisticheskem obshchestve" [The Family and the People's Well-Being in a Developed Socialist Society], edited by N. M. Rimashevskaya and S. A. Karapetyan, Mysl Press, Moscow, 1985, 237 pages]

[Text] It is believed that the book being reviewed opens up a new cycle of research on the economics of the people's well-being which is oriented not on its macroeconomic characteristics (real income, consumption fund, resources for consumption, and so forth), but on the conditions and way of life at the level of the family and, simultaneously, it forces us to look in a new manner at these macrocharacteristics, too.

Let us take, for example, the real income of the population. Does it reflect the actual level of the family's well-being? Yes, but not in full measure. The entire matter is that the existing scheme for calculating this indicator permits considering only the material components of the population's consumption. In the book it is stressed that the well-being of the people is not reduced to the consumption of material wealth alone. The consumption of various services is exerting a growing influence on the family's standard of living. Real income considers only material expenditures for it and here service as an activity is lost. "It makes no difference" to the consumer "whether his need is satisfied by a specific object or by a consumer service, all the more since frequently they are... interchangeable alternatives.... The population's income is the total equivalent of the total volume of the personal consumption of wealth and services..." (p 5). From the point of view of an individual family, such a situation is obvious, but it should be just as obvious from macroeconomic positions, too. In any case, it is clear that real income as a monetary estimate of material consumption does not characterize to a sufficient degree the well-being of a family as well as society as a whole. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce into circulation new indices which consider in full measure the consumption of services by the population. National economic planning took a step in this direction--the index of total volume of consumption of material wealth and services was introduced in the system of indicators of the standard of living, but only formally. This index is not employed in actual planning because the procedure for considering free services has not been sufficiently worked through.

In striving to present in full measure the sources of families' well-being, the authors nevertheless overlooked one of them. We are speaking of the subsidizing of retail prices, primarily for food commodities and paid services. This is a big financial resource for the well-being of the people and a reserve for the improvement of the relationship of the basic sources for raising the standard of living of the people. This subsidy is now distributed between the families in proportion to their purchasing power for the corresponding commodities and paid services. We believe that this is an insufficiently effective method for the use of such a financial resource. A portion of it, it seems to us, the major portion, should be "transferred" directly to the monetary income of the population which, apart from everything else, would contribute to an increase in the value of labor as a factor of production. Its reduced estimate, being only the visible sources of well-being, places labor in an inequitable position with another factor--fixed capital. And this substantially modifies the very estimate of the effectiveness of new equipment and objectively limits the economic expediency of its introduction.

In our opinion, the subsidy to retail prices must be considered as a source of the well-being of families and, consequently, of the population as a whole. Of special interest is its distribution in the cross section of individual groups of families which have been earmarked depending on the level of average per capita income. Approximate calculations show that this subsidy in large measure "settles" in relatively more well-to-do groups of consumers. Whether this is justified is a question which deserves attention. Its correct solution, of course, is possible only from positions of the family's well-being.

True, here the problem arises of reflecting the turnover tax in the prices of those commodities which are considered by the population's fund of real income. We believe that to the extent to which the turnover tax is an excise tax it should be excluded from these calculations.

The study which is presented in the book is based on the independent organization of tremendous statistical material. In essence, it is the first work in which the materials of the realized plan Taganrog-2 are generalized. And this is its special value. Even now official information has been "worked out" concerning the standard of living, and with its assistance it is already difficult to catch the new processes with which a change in the well-being of the population is now connected. Only the organization of new information, its processing, and coordination with national economic data will permit moving forward in the scientific formulation of the urgent problems of the people's standard of living and their solution. The book under review showed the prospects of such an approach.

This can be seen especially clearly in the example of an analysis of the differentiation of the wages of workers and the incomes of the family. It is clear that the effectiveness of distribution in accordance with labor is predetermined in decisive measure by the degree of differentiation of wages. According to investigations which were conducted, from the end of the 1960's to the beginning of the 1980's it increased somewhat. "Many economists consider this growth," the authors write, "as a favorable phenomenon and link it with an increase in the material incentive of the workers and a growth in the efficiency of production" (p 69). Is this actually so? It turns out, not quite: "A detailed analysis... showed that the increase in differentiation observed in recent years for the

country as a whole occurred primarily due to the growth in interbranch and regional differences in wages" (p 70). And how can there be a differentiation in wages without the consideration of these circumstances? There simply was none: "...the process of levelling wages," it is asserted in the monograph, "in essence continued" (p 70).

The authors also disclosed the basic factors which cause the levelling of wages. And very important here is the conclusion that "the levelling of wages furthers a rise in the minimum rates if it is not accompanied by the corresponding change in payment for the more highly specialized labor" (p 70). And this requires the recomprehension of the mechanism of introducing new wage minimums which considers the change in the status of highly qualified labor in connection with this. The trend which has developed shows that this mechanism leads to the transformation of "those lowly paid in the past to those highly paid, and those highly paid--to those which are medium and lowly paid" (p 71). It is clear that this kind of shift in no way contributed to a rise in the prestige of highly qualified labor.

The study of consumer behavior by different groups of families led to somewhat unexpected results (it is felt, also for the authors themselves). The essence of these results is reduced to the following: there exist "strata" of consumers; families which have approached the limit of the "stratum" "expand their consumption in some one direction...temporarily having /settled/ [in italics] their consumption at the level of limits of 'strata' for others" (p 133; italics ours--V. R.). In other words, in the limits "at the strata" the consumption of individual wealth becomes inelastic from income.

This thesis interested us. We checked its reliability on a sufficiently representative sample (about 800 budget investigations of families) for one big city at the beginning of the 1980's. The results obtained do not confirm the presence of "strata" of consumers. At the same time, the phenomenon of the monotony of per capita expenditures as a function of per capita income which is refuted by the very existence of "strata" is confirmed. The impression is created that in formulating the conclusion about the existence of "strata" of consumers the authors seemed to find themselves prisoners of the statistical material which they used. Perhaps, it would be worth checking this hypothesis on a more representative sample.

Let us also note the following circumstance that as soon as the phenomenon of "strata" of consumers exists, it also forces us to look in a new manner at the principles of structuring a differentiated balance of income and consumption of the population (DB). In the introduction to the book, one of its title-page editors, N. M. Rimashevskaya, points out that "the family approach to studies of the standard of living found its accomplishment in the structuring of the fundamentally new tool of the differentiated balance of income and consumption of the population" (p 9).

Basic in the structuring of the DB is the concept that the level of consumption of wealth increases monotonically (and in some cases decreases) with an increase in the mean per capita income in accordance with groups of the population which have been discriminated in this manner. However, as is shown in the book (p 135), families which have achieved the so-called target structure of consumption

"do not increase expenditures, with a growth in income," for individual items of wealth (examined specifically was the question of the level of consumer expenditures for clothing). But in such a case the main idea of DB "slackens"--the increase in expenditures for individual consumer items of wealth with an increase in mean per capita income. Also poorly justified is the employment of the coefficients of elasticity of consumption determined in the cross section of income groups. Demand as a function of the amount of income but, most of all, the very discrimination of consumer "strata," also appear doubtful.

The book under review is an important study. It is felt, if it can be said in this manner, that it is the tip of the iceberg of the results from the study of the problems of the popular well-being and the economics of the family which has been conducted for many years already in the TsEMI [Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics].

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